

VZCZCXYZ0001  
OO RUEHWEB

DE RUEHAM #2302/01 0891203  
ZNR UUUUU ZZH  
O 301203Z MAR 06  
FM AMEMBASSY AMMAN  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9270  
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC IMMEDIATE  
RHEHAAA/WHITE HOUSE WASHDC IMMEDIATE  
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE 0313  
RUEHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS IMMEDIATE 1213  
RUEHKK/ARAB ISRAELI COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE  
RUMICEA/USCINCCENT MACDILL AFB FL//CCPA// IMMEDIATE

UNCLAS AMMAN 002302

SIPDIS

STATE FOR NEA/ARN, NEA/PA, NEA/AIA, INR/NESA, R/MR,  
I/GNEA, B/BXN, B/BRN, NEA/PPD, NEA/IPA FOR ALTERMAN  
USAID/ANE/MEA  
LONDON FOR TSOU  
SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [KMDR](#) [JO](#)

SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION ON ISRAELI ELECTIONS

Editorial Commentary

-- "Sharon's Kadima"

Chief Editor Taher Odwan writes on the back-page of independent, mass-appeal Arabic daily Al-Arab Al-Yawm (03/30): "With no surprises, the Israeli elections concluded with the victory of Kadima party, headed by Sharon's successor Olmert.. This is the new situation. Sharon's Kadima rules Israel under Olmert and Hamas heads the Palestinian government, and both reject direct negotiations or acknowledging one another, and there is nothing on the table except the unilateral solution plan that Olmert inherited from Sharon. This means that there will be new equations on the political, security and settlements levels in the occupied West Bank. All currently standing circumstances, Palestinian, Israeli, regional and international, serve to maintain the status quo. It is expected that Hamas will commit to a truce or semi-truce and so will Israel, a truce interrupted at times by rocket launching here or there and Israeli assassinations of local Palestinian leaders. It is also expected that the Olmert government will continue to build the separation wall, finalize the secure borders in the valley area, and continue the active settlement around occupied Jerusalem. Yet, this status quo does not mean a freeze, but rather active movement towards some type of solution that Israel wants to impose using deceptive slogans, like establishing a Palestinian state side by side with Israel and withdrawing from West Bank territories, when in fact the situation on the ground confirms the impossibility of establishing a Palestinian state on divided parts of the West Bank and without Jerusalem and without resolving the refugee issue. The season of deception is on and we are going to find the Americans and maybe the Europeans in the front seats applauding the Olmert government. The scenario is complete, and the presence of Hamas in authority will not prevent its execution but rather will speed it. The important thing to say on Jordan's part at this stage is that whatever is being said in Israel about going back to the 'Jordanian option' is nothing but sick hallucinations and illusions."

-- "Jordan and Kadima's victory"

Columnist Hasan Barari writes on the op-ed page of centrist, independent Arabic daily Al-Ghad (03/30): "One could say that the current elections constituted a referendum on the issue of the demographic separation from the Palestinians. With the situation being as it is, Olmert feels that he now has popular authorization to set this separation issue into motion. Consequently, attention must be given to the seriousness that Kadima's program has on the future of the solution with the Palestinians, and, in turn, on Jordan, which has designed its foreign policy strategy on the basis of the success of the two-states solution. Kadima's program is very clear and does not require much interpretation. The important thing is that those other parties that will be involved, although slightly different, do not oppose the unilateral withdrawal and agree with Olmert that demographic developments require Israel to move quickly towards defining its borders with the Palestinians. There is also a conviction that there is no need for a Palestinian party that would accept Kadima's vision of the solution. Thus, the presence or lack thereof of a Palestinian partner does not affect Kadima in view of an international and American understanding of the next step. Olmert may even resort to tactics to improve the image of the compulsory solution, like inviting the Palestinians to a joint dialogue, knowing well that Hamas will not agree to this, consequently giving him an additional justification to move ahead with his unilateral plan. What does this mean to Jordan? The Jordanian foreign policy was based on the assumption that the two-states solution will serve Jordan's interests. Otherwise, not establishing a viable Palestinian state that geographically borders Jordan will bring great harm to Jordan's national security. It is obvious now that Kadima's program is not going to lead to the establishment of a Palestinian state as required, which constitutes a threat to Jordan's national security. This is a call from us to the Jordanian political elite to pay attention to the grave dangers that surrounds Jordan in the near future. One must not depend on the presence of a peace treaty with Israel. Israel is not going to undertake a military operation to threaten Jordan's national security, and so there is no fear from the Israeli military machine against Jordan. But Israel's policy towards the Palestinians will create new conditions that do not serve Jordan, the result of which will be that all options are open."

-- "No surprise, no silver lining"

Centrist influential among the elite English daily Jordan Times editorializes (03/30): "Beyond a few seats here and there, the Israeli election results have thrown up little by way of surprise. Ehud Olmert's Kadima Party will lead the next Israeli government. In all likelihood, Olmert will pay lip service to the idea of negotiating with the Palestinian side, while preparing to act unilaterally to set Israel's borders and end any chance of creating a viable Palestinian state. In spite of repeated entreaties by Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas for Israel to negotiate, in spite of offers by the new Palestinian Hamas-led government that it is ready to talk to the international community and willing to negotiate with Israel if Israel is committed to ending the occupation, Olmert will undoubtedly be aided and abetted in his fiction that there is no 'Palestinian partner for peace' by the international community. The West seems more concerned with sanctioning Palestinians for daring to resist the occupation than the occupying power for maintaining and strengthening its grip on that occupation. It is a measure of the bankruptcy of the international community regarding the Palestinian Israeli conflict that it thus tries to

treat the symptom, Hamas, rather than the disease, the Israeli occupation. Little will stand in the way of Olmert's dangerous unilateralism.. There is no silver lining."

HALE